

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 02834 190631Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----110251 190632Z /20
P 190608Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3606
INFO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 02834

EXDIS

EA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE; EA/ANP FOR SQUIRE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, NZ, US
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S VISIT TO UNITED STATES

REF: WELLINGTON 2750

1. CAPITAL'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER, EVENING POST, CARRIED
TWO SEPARATE ITEMS JULY 18 CONCERNING PRIMIN MULDOON'S
PLANS TO VISIT US AND MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER THIS
FALL.

2. IN FIRST ARTICLE CARRIED BACK PAGE, PRIMIN TOLD
REPORTERS AT WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE THAT DATE FOR
MEETING WITH PRESIDENT STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION BECAUSE
PROPOSED SEPTEMBER DATE "NOW NOT ALTOGETHER SUITABLE"
BECAUSE OF TWO OTHER OVERSEAS VISITS PLANNED FOR
AUGUST. PRIMIN SAID "SOME OF THE PRESSURE" WAS OFF
MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BECAUSE OF RECENT POLICY SPEECH
BY SECRETARY VANCE ON PACIFIC AREA (ASIA SOCIETY
SPEECH). HE ALSO MENTIONED ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING IN
WELLINGTON NEXT WEEK.

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3. SECOND ARTICLE STATES THAT DATES FOR MULDOON/PRESIDENT
CARTER MEETING ARE "AGAIN IN THE MELTING POT." QUOTING
INFORMED LOCAL SOURCES, ARTICLE SAYS NOVEMBER IS NOW
LOOKED AT BECAUSE PARLIAMENT'S LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR
MAKES PRIMIN'S PRESENCE IN NEW ZEALAND IMPORTANT DURING
SEPTEMBER. BILL ON ABORTION AND CHANGES IN SECURITY
OPERATIONS CITED AS THE IMPORTANT LEGISLATION. ARTICLE

NOTES THAT JUNE AND SEPTEMBER 15 DATES FOR MEETING "FELL THROUGH" AND CONCLUDES WITH SUMMARY OF PRIMIN'S OTHER OVERSEAS TRAVEL PLANS FOR YEAR: I.E., SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR AND BANGKOK, AUGUST 5-12; SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM MEETING IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA AUGUST 25; IMF ANNUAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON AND COMMONWEALTH FINANCE MINISTERS MEETING IN BARBADOS LATE SEPTEMBER.

4. IN A MORE COMPLETE REPORT ON MULDOON'S PRESS CONFERENCE, THE DOMINION NEWSPAPER THE FOLLOWING DAY QUOTED THE PRIME MINISTER AS SAYING THAT HE WAS DISTURBED AT THE AMOUNT OF TIME HE WAS HAVING TO SPEND OUT OF NEW ZEALAND. FOR THIS REASON, APPROACHES HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE UNITED STATES TO POSTPONE UNTIL NOVEMBER HIS SEPTEMBER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. MULDOON SAID THE ORIGINAL TRAVEL PLANS WOULD HAVE MEANT HIS BEING OUT OF THE COUNTRY FOR ABOUT FIVE WEEKS IN SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER. ALTHOUGH HE WAS KEEN TO ATTEND THE IMF MEETING IN WASHINGTON AND THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCE MINISTERS' MEETING IN BARBADOS, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THESE A SWIFT OVERSEAS VISIT ABOUT THE END OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION (MID TO LATE SEPTEMBER). THE VISIT TO PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD FOLLOW LATER.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: SO FAR, MULDOON'S EXPLANATION FOR THE POSTPONEMENT OF HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON HAS RAISED CONFIDENTIAL

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NO QUESTIONS. UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT ADVISES OTHERWISE, OUR POSTURE IF ASKED WILL BE TO REFER TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S EXPLANATION AND AVOID ANY COMMENT. SELDEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
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Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977WELLIN02834
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Format: TEL
From: WELLINGTON
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Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 WELLINGTON 2750
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1812144
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S VISIT TO UNITED STATES
TAGS: OVIP, PDIP, NZ, US, (MULDOON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/154b9a67-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009